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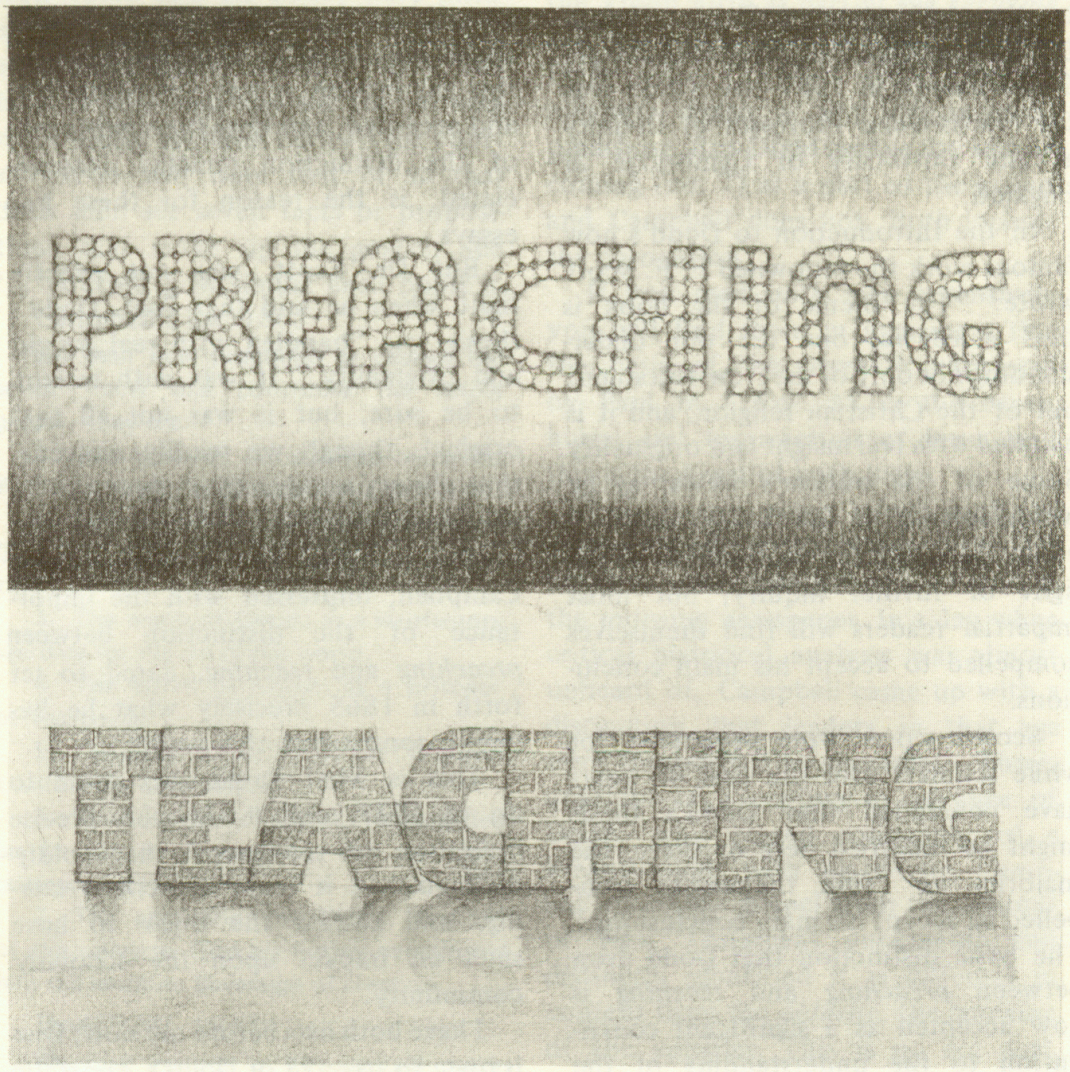

The New Testament writers draw a clear distinction between preaching and teaching.

— *C. H. Dodd*

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Principles of Unity and Fellowship . . .

PREACHING AND TEACHING: A VITAL DISTINCTION

(Part 2: The Thesis Defended)

Contemporary New Testament scholars, such as Krister Stendahl of Harvard, will tell you that while in this generation the overriding issue in New Testament studies is hermeneutics (questions related to interpretation) the issue in the previous generation was the nature of *kerugma* (the gospel), spurred by the publication of Charles Harold Dodd's *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development* in 1937. Dr. Dodd was the Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge in England.

In the Introduction to Dodd's now famous work the renowned E. F. Scott wrote: "'The theme of the book is thus a central one for our understanding not only of the New Testament but of the Christian religion; and it is handled with real insight and originality. Some of the author's views, as he would himself be the first to acknowledge, will need to be modified in the light of further inquiry, but most impartial readers will find themselves compelled to accept his main conclusions."

Scott's words were prophetic, for while scholars over the past 40 years have concluded that Dodd's thesis might be modified here or there, the majority *do* "find themselves compelled to accept his main conclusions." The basic distinction that Dodd drew between *preaching* and *teaching is* now accepted as a significant contribution to the understanding of the New Testament, although there is disagreement as to what precisely falls into one or the other categories and the extent of possible overlapping. But since Dodd no responsible scholar would argue that there is no distinction between the terms, or that the whole of New Testament revelation constitutes the gospel. The fact that in our own ranks of Churches of Christ this distinction is not yet recognized and accepted, and thus the significance of the distinction remains unappreciated, is the reason for these two essays.

But Dr. Scott was not exactly right when he said that Prof. Dodd's thesis was "handled with real insight and originality." It was with insight, to be sure, but it was not all that original, though we readily concede that almost no idea these days can he completely original. We pointed out in our last that our own Alexander Campbell, impressed with the importance of the distinction between *preaching* and *teaching,* dared to set forth in 1865 precisely what he believed constituted the gospel.

This is what Dodd also dared to do in 1937, and it was this precise definition of the gospel that boldly distinguished it from didache, *teaching,* and caused the book to have such an impact upon the scholarly community.

I have both lists before me now. One is open to page 18 of Dodd's *Apostolic Preaching,* the other is open to page 516 of the *Millennial Harbinger* for 1865, under the heading "The Gospel," which is the last thing Campbell ever wrote after 40 years as an editor.

I just now asked my Ouida to look at the two lists and tell me what she thinks. She concluded that the one written in 1937 was surely dependent upon the one prepared in 1865, that Dodd must have been influenced by Campbell. But I assured her that this does not necessarily follow, for both men could and no doubt were influenced by the same original sources, the scriptures. But I present both lists here so that you can see the striking resemblance between the two for yourself. You will note first of all that both men see seven facts or propositions that make up the gospel. See for yourself how similar each point is.

Campbell's list, 1865:

We shall now propound or declare the seven Facts that constitute the whole gospel. They are:

1. The birth of Christ; God being his Father and the Virgin Mary his mother.

2. The life of Christ; as the oracle of God and the beau ideal of human perfection.

3. The death of Christ; as a satisfactory sacrifice for the sin of the world.

4. The burial of Christ; as a prisoner of the grave.

5. The resurrection of Christ; "O grave! I will be thy destruction."

6. The ascension of Christ; "He ascended up far above all heavens, that he might possess all things."

7. The coronation of Christ, as Lord of the universe. God his Father constituted him the absolute Sovereign of creation.

Dodd's list, 1937:

We may restore it (the gospel) somewhat after this fashion:

1. *The* prophecies *are* fulfilled, and *the* new age is inaugurated by the coming of Christ.

2. He was born of the seed of David.

3. He died according to the scriptures, to deliver us from the present evil age.

4. He was buried.

5. He rose on the third day according to the Scriptures.

6. He is exalted at the right hand of God as Son of God end Lord of quick and dead.

7. He will come again as judge and savior of men.

You will note that 2 thru 6 are virtually the same. There is disagreement in two instances. Campbell makes the Virgin Birth as part of the *kerugma* and Dodd does not. I would agree with Dodd since this fact about Jesus is nowhere made a part of apostolic preaching. But Dodd makes the second coming (no. 7) as a part of the gospel and Campbell does not. Both include the coronation.

If you read both men extensively you will find them in agreement that the basis of the gospel is expressed by Paul in 1 Cor. 15 as the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, and this is the heart of both lists.

This is one more instance of the modernity of Alexander Campbell, who is nearly always as fresh and relevant as the morning newspaper. In a day when critical historical analysis was almost unheard of, Campbell came up with a distinction that leaders in that age were unprepared to appreciate. Three-quarters of a century in advance of Dodd, who staged something of a breakthrough with his thesis, Campbell lifted the gospel from the context of New Testament documents and distinctly identified it as different in content from the *didache,* the *teaching* of the apostles. This is no big deal, perhaps, but I am enough of a Campbellite to want old Uncle Alex to get his share of the glory, along with C. H. Dodd. I suspect that both C. H. Dodd and E. F. Scott would have been surprised if someone had shown them Campbell's definition of the gospel as drawn up in 1865. It is hard to be original with Alexander Campbell around!

But no one has made the distinction between preaching and teaching any clearer than C. H. Dodd. Read him: "The New Testament writers draw a clear distinction between preaching and teaching. The distinction is preserved in Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypse, and must be considered characteristic of early Christian usage in general. Teaching *(didaskein) is* in large majority of cases ethical instruction ... Preaching, on the other hand, is the public proclamation of Christianity to the non-Christian world . . . Much of our preaching in church at the present day would not have been recognized by the early Christians as *kerugma.* It is teaching, or exhortation *(paraklesis),* or it is what they called *homilia,* that is, the more or less informal discussion of various aspects of Christian life and thought, addressed to a congregation already established in the faith."

Dodd takes special note of Gal. 2:2 where Paul says he "laid before them" the gospel he preached among the Gentiles, which points to a specific message easily identifiable as the same message Peter was preaching to Jews. We are not to suppose that Paul laid out the entire New Testament, even including the book of Revelation! Dodd opens his argument with a reference to 1 Cor. 1:21, where Paul refers to "the foolishness of the preaching," and says that *kerugma* here refers not to the action of the preacher, that is, the *way* he is preaching, but to the *content of* his message. He also shows from 1 Cor. 3:10 that Paul "laid a foundation" in preaching the gospel, while others "build on the foundation" by teaching the apostles' doctrine. This is also true of 1 Cor. 4:15 where the apostle assures the Corinthians that they had but one father in the gospel (preaching), while they have many tutors or guides (teaching). Dodd says the gospel is summarized in Gal. 3:1 as "before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified," whereas the great body of instruction to the Galatians and others is teaching.

In 1950 Alan Richardson, canon of Durham, gave Dodd credit for his own understanding of these terms. "The fundamental idea of these words (for *preaching) is* the telling of news to people who had not heard it before — 'evangelization.' In the NT preaching has nothing to do with the delivery of sermons to the converted, which is what it usually means today, but always concerns the proclamation of the 'good tidings of God' to the non-Christian world. As such it is to be distinguished from *teaching*

(Gk. didache), which in the NT normally means ethical instruction, occasionally apologetics or instruction in the faith." He then refers the reader to Dodd's hook. Richardson goes on to show that the preachers were evangelists who converted sinners through the proclamation of the cross of Christ and the resurrection, and then turned them over to teachers who built them up in the faith. All this is in *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, by Alan Richardson, p. 172-173.

This states our case better than we could do so ourselves, and it is supported by the very highest biblical scholarship, from modern scientific research as well as the best from our own history. Even those among us who want to make the whole New Testament the gospel hardly believe what they contend for, for they themselves refer to "the fundamentals" as being for the outsiders, while another body of material is for the insiders. Or they'll talk about "preaching to the brethren" as being different in content than when they "preach to the lost." They would do well to sharpen these distinctions and come to see what Campbell, Dodd and others are getting at. Surely we can see that it is one message that enrolls disciples into the school of Christ, which is the gospel; while it is a different body of instructions that the disciples are to be trained in once they are matriculated in the school, which is the *didache* (teaching).

But our argument goes beyond a mere distinction in terms, for we are saying that it is the gospel, and only the gospel, that constitutes the grounds for unity and fellowship. That is, the gospel brings one into the fellowship (1 Cor. 1:9), while it is *teaching* that strengthens him in the fellowship. The gospel is facts, which one believes and acts upon. There is no place for opinions or theories. He is a Christian when he believes and obeys. This is what makes him or her a brother or sister and a part of the fellowship. Once in the fellowship a brother or sister spends a lifetime in instruction in the apostles' doctrine. Acts 2:42 shows that the baptized believers (in the fellowship) "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine." Here there will be a place for theories and opinions. Peter may have said that Paul wrote many things that are hard to understand — indicating that there is room for different interpretations — but Peter would never have said that about the gospel itself. One who is right about the gospel (and *that is* what makes her our sister) may be wrong in her understanding of this or that point of doctrine. The New Testament obviously lends itself to diversity of understanding. Some are babes, others are mature.

This is what our pioneers meant by "In matters of (the) faith (meaning *the gospel)* unity; in matters of opinion (meaning differences in understanding of the scriptures generally), liberty; in all things, love."

I trust we can now see how untenable it is to talk about one being unfaithful to the gospel if he uses instrumental music or if he utilizes a society for the preaching of the gospel. Or if he is wrong on the millennium, or if he speaks in tongues (or if he doesn't!). What the New Testament says about tongues, which is not too clear perhaps, is quite apart from the gospel, which is clear since it is facts! One may

be very true to the gospel, regardless of what he believes about tongues. Whether a church has an organ has not one thing to do with whether it is true to the gospel. The organ question grows out of differing interpretations of the *didache*, or perhaps the silence of the apostles' teaching.

So here we have a vital principle for the unity of the church. We unite upon the gospel. Once united in the bond of a living and loving fellowship, we share together in the great and beautiful teaching of the apostles, learning more and more with the years, and "being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor. 3:18). Any plea for unity on the basis that we must see alike on all the apostles' teaching is not a plea for unity at all, but a demand for blind conformity that only leads to more and more division and more and more strife among sisters and brothers. — *the Editor*

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SERVING THE SUPPER — BACKWARDS!

It has probably happened many times. In fact it happened to me the first time I attempted to serve the Lord's Supper when the elders had me to take charge of the service to a handful in a back room on a Sunday evening. I picked up the tray of multiple communion cups *first,* perhaps because I was nervous and it was the biggest. But anyone knows is is the loaf (or rather *crumbs)* that conies first, for Mt. 26:26 says Jesus took bread, and the next verse says *"Then* he took the cup . . ." There can be no question about the order. I really botched it, but I don't recall that anyone said a word. They might not have noticed. That was 40 years ago. I learned my lesson for I haven't made that mistake since.

But it happened to my son Ben the other Sunday, and under much more auspicious circumstances than in the back room of a small town church on a Sunday night. It was a Sunday morning before 600 or more onlookers. But he had company for his misery. It was youth Sunday or something of the sort. Anyway, the teenagers were serving the Supper. The *boys,* that is. In our Churches of Christ the girls can't serve, not even the Supper. Neither can they usher or even take up the visitors' cards. Very small boys can do the latter, but not little girls.

The boys started out right, thanking the Lord for the *bread,* but the quarterback started passing out the trays, lots of them. The gang dutifully passed through the congregation in the usual drill-team style of their seniors, serving the cups first. But at one end of the line some of the boys saw the mistake and managed a few plates of bread. So some were serving the cups and others the bread. When our Ben, with tray in hand on one end of a long row, saw his buddy on the other side with a plate of bread, he panicked and cried to himself, "Holy horrors," which was a far more appropriate remark for the occasion than many of his more audible remarks!

The boys made it through the service even if in reverse or partly in reverse, with part of the congregation partaking in the "scriptural order" and others not. At least they got the collection right. They got it in the third slot and it was "Upon the first day of the week." All in all they were about two thirds right that Sunday a.m. Not bad for teenagers. In a few more years they'll be letter-perfect, just like their seniors.

Many in the congregation must not have noticed the *faux pas.* They may have been thinking about the crucified and risen Lord, and He does have a way of distracting one from mistakes, even big ones. But some were upset by the irregularity and did not partake of the Supper at all. Even some of the leaders let the bread and the cup (rather the cup and the bread, in that order) pass them by, lest they partake unscripturally, and joined a number of others in the second serving of the Supper that night. I understand that at the night service they got it right. They *always* do it right at that church, for almost a century they have. And it was my boy, a Garrett, along with other fumbling youths, that spoiled a perfect record. It is a very sad situation.

Ben is the Bob Hope of the family in that he likes to tell things funny. While that blunder in the assembly was not funny at the time, you would have to laugh to hear him describe his predicament. "When I saw those freaks passing out the trays instead of the plates I could have croaked." And when he saw that some of them had the bread and others the cups, "I could have crawled under the pews and hid." He tells *that* story better than Bob Hope could. He always has one to tell. Last night he told us about the Texas Aggie that moved to Oklahoma and raised the IQ level of both states. It is just as well that he not tell that one in Oklahoma — or at College Station!

The fun aside, I've been thinking about that "backwards Supper" at one of our true and staid Churches of Christ. It tells a lot about what has happened to us as a people, and it provides a hint or two on what we have done to our kids.

If it is really that big a deal that the sequence of the Supper be so right that our folk have to pass it by when not in sequence, why did not one of the elders step to the Table and gently advise the boys to start over and pass the bread first? "It's OK, boys. No harm done. We are all a family and the Lord is with us, and that's what we are thinking about just now. Just start over and pass the bread first," he could have said.

But, no, even mature Christians, shepherds of the flock, business men who handle more sensitive problems than that every day, sat there like a wooden Indian in front of a cigar store, doing nothing, even when they themselves could not conscientiously partake when the boys flubbed the order. It shows how hung up we are in our formalities and how tense we are. Everybody is scared to say or do anything when the disc on the record player gets stuck. Humor would have done it. An elder sitting nearby could have stepped up to the quarterback and whispered, "Maybe you'd better back up and start

over. The preachers might get us!" I doubt if anyone could seriously suppose that the Lord would care all that much. After all, He looks upon the heart, not outward appearance. That is what we are supposed to believe.

It also reveals how far we have gone into an insipid, oppressive legalism. Imagine not being able to "celebrate the festival" because a few nervous boys got mixed up on the order of the meal. This business of "make sure that we've got it right" is driving our people crazy and causing our kids to laugh at us. We have no right to pity the Pharisees when we see them looking over each other's shoulder to make sure that no one used a second hand in tying a knot or spat on a rough surface instead of a smooth one.

The boys would not be all that nervous to start with if we'd come down off our legalistic high horse and play it cooler. The kids can relax on the gym floor or at a pizza parlor with each other because mistakes are forgivable in those places. But when they gather with the righteous at the Be-sure-to-get-it-right Church of Christ, where folk line up and march like tin soldiers to share a simple meal with the lowly Jesus, they are indeed ready to cry *Holy horrors!* when something goes wrong. We teach them without realizing it, that they are to forget the humble Galilean in order to perfect our System. Instead of, "Boys, let's be sure to get it right!", somebody ought to mention Jesus. And when we *really* think of Jesus, things like that do not matter. If He could speak forgivingly to a street woman taken in a sinful act, and show more judgment toward her accusers than toward her, He is not likely to get beside Himself when excited boys pick up one dish instead of another.

Dear reader, stop and think. What are we doing to ourselves and our children with this kind of religion?

Mark it well. As long as those kids live they will remember how they blew it when they served the Lord's supper. They'll remember men and women, with long years in the faith, taking the Supper from their hands and then passing it by — because it wasn't in the right order. The "symbols" had to be lined up right before they could remember their Lord. They'll remember them coming back to church that night and partaking of it, in simon-pure sequence from the hands of those who know how to do the Lord's work right.

Yes, they'll remember those things when they are in college where they will see more love, compassion, and understanding — and more humor and relaxation — on the part of skeptics and infidels than they do in the elders of the church. They may well be driven to infidelity when they see people of the world displaying more of the Spirit of Christ than the church folk back home.

As for the Lord's Supper, they realize now if not before that the most important thing about it is that you *do* it right.

I am a third generation Church of Christer, born and bred in our best circles. You would think that if anyone could understand us, I could. But sometimes I am at a loss to perceive what has happened to us. At times I just can't believe it. I know there is a better way, the way of the heart, and I am resolved to stand with that host among us that is set upon liberating us from our debilitating carnality.

Let's not give up! Never! — *the Ed.*

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Travel Letter . . .

IN THE CRADLE OF THE CONFEDERACY

If you are buying the "See America First" bit (not many of us have a second choice!), then you should by all means include Montgomery, Alabama on your itinerary of travel. Governor George Wallace's big "White House" and Jefferson Davis' little "White House" are across the street from each other — and where else can you find the likes of that in all our 50 states? Wallace would rule the nation from the one as Davis sought to rule the Confederacy from the other, wheelchairs and Union soldiers notwithstanding. It is a lovely old city, dotted here and there with historic shrines already restored or in process of restoration. This includes the elegant old railway station, which will be a museum and from which one can take a tunnel to the Alabama river for a ferry ride up through the city and countryside. The main street is unusually wide and has new covered walkways, gardens, and old buildings with new colorful facades. The church could learn a lesson on what renewal means!

But the most attractive thing in this cradle of the Confederacy to me is a growing band of free and happy Church of Christers, who invited me to come and do my thing for a weekend. These are mostly young, successful business and professional people who are at the second level of leadership in the church. They arranged for me to address their assembly, one of the older churches that moved from downtown to the suburbs, and I was prepared to do so, but the elders felt they should drop the plan when some of the preachers felt threatened, which I was also prepared for. So we had gatherings in different homes, with eager listeners from wall to wall, and an evening session at Methodist-related Huntingdon College. The Sunday I was there I went along with the others to the Highland Church of Christ in Carriage Hills.

They are presently "between preachers." I, too, sometimes get caught between preachers, but the metaphor here is different. This gave me a chance to hear one of our less professional voices, though nonetheless elegant. He spoke with love and conviction. The young elder who presided had a glad heart and a winsome smile. No wonder he has taken a fledgling business and turned it into a 50-million dollar a year enterprise. The song leader stood up there and smiled just as if he were happy, and even

praised the Lord right there before all of us. At our house sessions he got all happy about the promises of Jesus and even said a few *Amens*. Well, this was the land of Dixie and he can be forgiven. They embrace each other and talk about how they love one another. It beats all you ever saw.

As I sat in the assembly that morning I thought about how something different is happening among us. Those who want to change things or who have different views are not leaving and starting "a faithful church," a fallacious practice that has divided and sub-divided us all these years, including Montgomery, Alabama. There I sat as one of the most controversial figures among us, but I was there as *a peacemaker,* and they all knew this or most of them. In a way I was rejected, in that I was cancelled out of the pulpit, but for the most part I was loved, accepted and appreciated, and this was evident even on the part of those who led the service. They subscribe to this journal and share my concerns. One of the elders commented after hearing me in one of the homes, "It is too bad all our congregation can't hear him." But I could in no way be recognized, not even to pray to the Father. But no one bothered to apologize in that we all understood. *Politics.* Our elders, some of them at least, are conditioned, not unlike Pavlov's dog, to yield to clerical demands. They have a morbid fear of being ostracized by other congregations.

In such instances, and they are not infrequent, I have the odd experience of being both accepted and rejected at the same time, of being both loved and feared, and of winning even when I appear to be losing. It is descriptive of a revolution, a war of ideas and principles, a fight for men's minds, a struggle for freedom. In this case a few preachers had the church's blind loyalty, as a kind of reflex action in the face of implied threats; but I (or what I stand for) had their hearts. They really want what I envisage for the Church of Christ rather than what certain preachers demand, but the thought of change makes them uneasy.

One of these bright young Turks, John Land, conned me into sitting in on (but not actually teaching!) his Sunday School class, which is presently making its way through Campbell's *Declaration and Address.* He has one wall of his classroom covered with a chart and dateline that shows all the important events of the Restoration Movement, including the dates when the major colleges began. Would you have guessed that our folk are doing things like that these days, studying Campbell's famous magna charter each Sunday morning?

I pointed out to them that there are two important facts in our history that have broad significance. One is that our people, Alexander Campbell in particular, were the first to give the American church a modern translation of the New Testament, and in a day when it could hardly be imagined, and as early as 1827. Goodspeed in his book on the English Bible gives Campbell credit for this. When Campbell was giving some of the old politicians a hard time on the slavery question in the 1829 Virginia Constitutional Convention, John Randolph advised his colleagues that the young clergyman bore watching since Almighty God's Bible doesn't even satisfy him for he has created one of his own!

The other notable fact is that of all the mergers in the history of the ecumenical movement, and there have been about forty, our people brought about the first one in the uniting of the Stone and Campbell churches. We have a heritage for which we can be thankful — and one that we should know something about.

But I got myself in trouble with one or two in the class when something came up about the state of those not yet baptized for the remission of sins. "Birth is not the beginning of life," I reminded them, a physical fact that our folk are reluctant to recognize in the spiritual realm. The believer has life — even eternal life according to Jn. 5:24 — and will not come into condemnation. He yet needs to he formally inducted into the family through baptism for remission of sins. "But is he saved before he is baptized?" they wanted to know. I then quoted Campbell's distinction in the MacCalla debate: "Paul was really justified when he believed, formally justified when he was baptized." That was Campbell's way of harmonizing the many passages on the sinner being saved when he believes with those that require baptism for remission of sins. Campbell insisted that baptism is not pardon-procuring but pardon-assuring, using his terminology.

Well, this upset a few of them. Some folk are made uneasy by new ideas and really don't like to think all that much. They especially dislike hearing those quotes from Alexander Campbell where he sounds so unlike what they've always heard in the Church of Christ. For instance, in the Rice debate, Campbell quite frankly admitted, "In any event I do not believe that baptism is absolutely essential to salvation." It just doesn't sound like one of those "sound" sermons in a gospel meeting at the Fifth and Izzard Church of Christ in Little Rock!

Some minds among us are disturbed by teachers who seem to vacillate. They like certainty, not equivocation. They want clear-cut consistency, not the slightest ambivalence. The sinner is saved before he is baptized or he isn't, now which is it? — and never mind this "in a sense" business. Those who talk this way don't know what to think even of themselves when they admit that the believer *does* have life before he is finally born of water. They themselves are now equivocating.

In my study of Restoration literature I have noticed that our most dedicated, truth-seeking leaders have been less than dogmatic on the subject of baptism, and it is, by the way, a subject upon which our people have never seen eye to eye. We gain nothing by dogmatism. And we must recognize that the man who equivocates may do so out of strength of character, not weakness of character. He may be making an honest effort to reconcile different emphases in the scriptures. We do such ones, as well as ourselves, a great disservice by insisting that they must be certain about everything and have no doubts whatever. There are certainties to be sure, but this fact does not give us the right to be certain about *everything.*

Montgomery is a city of two cultures, one white and one black, and segregation is as real as it ever was, civil rights legislation (and the Christian imperative!) notwithstanding. On Sunday my friends took me to a country club for dinner — private, no blacks except those that served us. Blacks *could*

join by law, but to be a member one must be recommended by at least two others. And what black man would care or dare to break into such a circle when he knows he's not wanted. There are many such private eating and playing clubs in the city, deliberately arranged to preserve the two cultures.

The black brother is not supposed to play golf anyway, of course, or to take his family out for dinner, or to go out for a swim. The white kids have private clubs all over town where they can swim and dance or whatever, but the blacks have nowhere to go, for there are not even any public swimming places. Private schools are also doing well for the same reason, even though blacks and whites are somewhat integrated in the public schools.

I raised this question with my friends while we dined. "I can come along with you because I'm *white,"* I reminded them. "Doesn't it bother the church that such as this exists?" *We never think about it,* was their candid reply, not meaning to be indifferent. It *should* disturb believers terribly that their own brothers and sisters cannot go out for dinner and for a swim to a decent place, like they can, because they are black. I reminded them that such injustices are almost certainly more important to God Almighty than whether or not a church has instrumental music.

It only shows how much the world has influenced the church instead of the other way. Yea, the church *reflects* this worldly attitude, being more conformed to the world than to the Nazarene who would not only dine with blacks but would even wash their feet. It is ironical that the church, whose Head is the Great Revolutionary, should throughout history be one of the world's most conservative institutions. The church in the south, with but a few noble exceptions, has actually aided and abetted segregation and racism. I asked a young Christian business man if the blacks got a fair shake in the business world. *No!* was his reply. The church not only does not raise its voice against such injustice, for the most part, but has actually helped to create the condition. Montgomery is a classic example of what the President's Commission of Racism reported some years ago. "This nation is becoming a nation of two separate and distinct cultures, one white and one black ..." This is hardly the unity for which our Savior prayed. If the church is not concerned, who will be?

But when one sees with his own eyes the underground Church of Christ here and there across the country, such as those I met in Montgomery, there is reason to hold on to that love that believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. The Church of Christ of tomorrow, like many other of God's people, is going to be different. The present-day remnant is going to make it so. — *the Editor*

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Pilgrimage of Joy . . .

"HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH"

W. Carl Ketcherside

I am writing this chapter on the forty-eighth anniversary of our wedding. I am doing so because it is also the thirty-ninth anniversary of our arrival in Saint Louis. Nell and I had come to the city a few weeks before and rented a modest cottage on Page Avenue, and then returned to Nevada to go through the traumatic experience of closing out one phase of our earthly sojourn. By the afternoon of June 23, 1937, the moving van backed out of our graveled driveway and started the journey across the state. Soon after, we followed in our automobile, and after staying all night at a motel enroute, arrived at our new home the next morning to find the movers there awaiting our coming.

Almost immediately we were caught up in the work of the congregations. I use the word in the plural because the brethren had decided not to await our arrival to plant another community of believers. About fifty of them banded together and purchased a modest meetinghouse at 5344 Lillian Avenue, in the northern part of the city. A great many of the most talented brethren were associated with the new effort, but there were men of promise remaining with the original congregation, some of them still quite young. The older congregation held its mid-week meeting on Wednesday night and the new one on Thursday night. On each of those nights brethren from both places were together exploring the Word. On Sunday nights there was an exchange of speakers and it was as if one large family, living in two houses, met together for visitation and sharing.

The Thompson and Bilyeu families bought a sizeable acreage in the beautiful and fertile Florissant Valley, and Brother Leonard Bilyeu developed five acres as a kind of playground for the brethren. Every Fourth of July, all of the brethren from congregations on both sides of the Mississippi River gathered for a day of physical relaxation and spiritual uplift, and in late autumn all returned again for a wiener roast and a time of rejoicing in the presence of one another. There was a closeness among the families such as is seldom seen, and although rigid discipline was maintained in the congregations, it was not heavy-handed and authoritarian.

I began at once a door-to-door visitation in the area adjacent to the Manchester site, and soon a number of brethren joined together to place an invitation in every home in a carefully mapped-out territory. Meanwhile the brethren in the northern part of the city were knocking on fifteen-hundred doors, and when I was free I went to work with them, helping to take a religious census which became a valuable aid in our future endeavors. Both congregations began to grow numerically and the fruit of hard work and fervent prayers could be seen. I do not recall ever seeing a more makeshift baptistry than the one at Manchester Avenue. It consisted of a steel stock tank installed beneath the floor of the speaker's platform, but scores of people were immersed into Christ and no one ever made a complaint about the inconvenience.

Before the first year was ended it became apparent that we were ready for the second phase of our plan. We had two congregations functioning without a special minister and with a leadership which knew how to involve the membership in active participation. A different speaker delivered a message of edification and exhortation each Sunday morning and evening, and the classes at midweek meetings

were taught by various brethren who made diligent preparation. Open expression of different views was encouraged in the studies, and although firm opinions were set forth, I do not recall any rudeness or imposition. I took my turn in speaking, but most of the time I listened and learned from clothing salesmen, production line workers, bookkeepers, night watchmen, bakers and others. All of them drew upon incidents in their own lives to illustrate the message for the rest of us and we were thus permitted to hear a great many modern parables.

It was now time for us to share our life in the Lord on a wider basis. The brethren met for several lengthy sessions to talk about and plan the approach we should take in helping to develop the talents and abilities of those who were eager to prepare themselves for greater service. At the outset it was agreed that we would not organize anything. I would simply teach the Word of God with the Bible as our only textbook. The studies would be made available to any person, regardless of age, who wanted to come. There would be no tuition or charges of any kind. We would have a six-weeks course in the winter, on the same schedule as the public schools, starting at 9:00 a.m. and closing at 4:00 p.m. Each week there would be two night sessions of two hours each. One of these would be held at 7121 Manchester Avenue, the other at 5344 Lillian Avenue. All day classes would be at the Manchester Avenue address because of the accessibility to modestly priced eating places in the area.

Members who wished to do so would open up their homes and rent sleeping quarters to students. Other students would find such facilities in private homes near the place of study. This was never a problem and as time went on many of the students made a profound spiritual impact upon the homes where they rented rooms. One day each week the sisters from each congregation would bring home-cooked food at noon and serve it in the basement to all who wished to partake. It was expected that on these two days there would be sufficient food remaining so the out-of-town students could eat again that evening. So many persons were directly involved that the congregations were alive and active and all were sharing in a great learning experience.

A good many preaching brethren attended, and a number of young men and women who had just graduated from high school came to study before entering college or university. From the outset it was agreed we would not try to develop a certain class of brethren. We were afraid this would lead to a clerical caste. We decided to abide by the dictum of Benjamin Franklin, the gospel preacher, who said, "Teach the whole Bible to the whole church, and the leadership will rise to the top as cream rises on the milk." Ten congregations in the area opened their pulpits every Sunday to men who were attending, and thus heard a different speaker every Sunday morning and night. Some of these never intended to become evangelists, but many of them did become elders at a later date.

It soon became apparent that we could extend the period of intensive study and we doubled the time to three months. We did a great many interesting things together although the class grew to approximately one-hundred. Every Thanksgiving Day we studied until noon and then went to a nearby

Masonic Temple where we had rented a huge dining-hall for the occasion. We had a basket dinner followed by a program of edification in the afternoon at which anyone could speak briefly about what was upon his heart.

When we studied about the death of Joseph and the embalming of his body, I took the whole class for an afternoon at the beautiful art museum. I had been accorded the privilege of lecturing on Egyptology in the "mummy room" and frequently the talk on the technique of embalming, made especially vivid by the sarcophagus on display, attracted a number of tourists and visitors who thought it was a regular feature presented by museum personnel. When we reached Exodus and Leviticus, we went on Friday night at sunset to Temple Israel where we occasionally out-numbered the Jewish worshipers at this first sabbath service. I became so well acquainted with the senior rabbi, Dr. Ferdinand M. Isserman, that he frequently announced, "We have Dr. Ketcherside and numerous of his disciples with us tonight, and after the blessing of the Torah I am going to request that he come forward and bring us a greeting." I never failed to express our gratitude to the Jews present because their fathers had guarded the sacred oracles and given us the Messiah to sit upon David's throne.

Every passing month in Saint Louis brought new triumphs of the Spirit, but there was an air of foreboding over the country which aroused fear and unrest in the hearts of the people. The name of Adolf Hitler began to appear on the front page of the newspaper every day. In March 1938 the German regime annexed Austria. In September goose-stepping troops occupied the Sudentenland in Czechoslovakia. In the same month Neville Chamberlain, prime minister of Great Britain, sought to halt further inroads by signing the Munich Pact, representing a policy of abject appeasement. Hitler continued his ruthless acts of aggression and Chamberlain was forced to declare war on Germany on September 3, 1939.

Meanwhile we continued with "business as usual" in Saint Louis, although most of us realized that the United States would become actively involved. As President Roosevelt began to step up the preparedness program people began to move to the city, attracted by jobs and higher wages. The meetinghouses were filled on Sunday. The contributions grew perceptibly. Meanwhile, when Germany invaded Norway and the British forces were defeated, Chamberlain gave way to Winston Churchill, who told the British people, "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat."

All over our country, factories began to hum with intensified acceleration. Munitions manufacturing plants worked around the clock. Bombing planes were turned out with the precision of clockwork. Great army camps began to spring up in strategic locations, and it was at one of these posts my father became the first civilian casualty of World War Two, losing his life on October 25, 1941. He had hired on as a carpenter supervisor at the largest wage he had ever drawn in his life. He had dreams of paying off his debts in a very few weeks. For the first time in his life he would be free of the burden of owing money to others. He told my mother that as soon as he made enough the two of them would take a vacation and return to the place where she was born and lived as a girl.

He was sent to Neosho, Missouri to do construction work on Camp Crowder, but he was able to work but three days. The heavy autumn rains had fallen for days on end and the field was a quagmire. On the third day after his arrival, my father was working on a high scaffold bolting sections of a huge prefabricated dining-hall together near the roof. A shudder went through the structure and those who could leaped from it as it began to collapse. It drove the body of my father four feet into the earth and almost every hone was broken. He survived long enough to whisper his name and that of my mother through the bloody froth bubbling from his lips, and then the spirit fled from the crushed and broken tabernacle.

I went to Neosho to meet my mother and claim the body and we rode back to Topeka together. I think we were numbed by our loss. When the mortuary closed the night before the memorial service was to be held, I asked permission from the mortician to stay for a few minutes. He allowed me to do so, and we were alone for the last time on earth — a boy and his dad. As I looked at him it seemed that he moved. It appeared that his chest raised and lowered as if he were breathing in gently the precious oxygen which we all inhale without thinking about it. But I knew it was fantasy. I would never be able to speak to him again in the flesh. He would never hear me preach again, and I would never hear the good news from his lips. I made him a promise that l would keep the faith until we met. I closed the door softly and walked out into the night.

When we arrived back in Saint Louis and I examined the mail there was a postcard from my father. It was written the night before he was killed. He told me how pleased he was to be in a place where there was a congregation which he could help without taking any financial aid. He also told me that he was sorry to have to be away from home and then added a phrase which seemed almost prophetic: "Sometimes we have to be absent from each other so our joy will be greater when we meet again." I still have the card. At the time when I first saw the old familiar handwriting, I thought, "He being dead, yet speaketh!"

A short time later I wrote an article for a special issue of *Macedonian Call* which was devoted largely to the life and death of my father. I am taking the liberty of sharing with you the first rather lengthy paragraph:

> I stood with bowed head beside an open grave a few weeks ago. The sun had hidden her face, and a gray sky wept tears, as the chill of the autumn afternoon crept into the blood of those who stood to look down upon the mountain of flowers surrounding a simple casket. I stood with my hand upon the shoulder of one of the dearest women on earth to me — my mother, for there before us cold and rigid in death lay her husband and my father. The last song had been sung at the mortuary a short time before, and now a faithful brother in Christ was speaking his final words. Many of those who stood near were wiping away the tears which stole silently and unashamedly down their

> cheeks. But I could not weep for him who had gone on before. One does not weep for the hero who dies in his struggle for principle, who surrenders his armor to the only enemy strong enough to conquer him — death! I have often wondered as I stood beside other graves as the speaker, just how I would feel when I stood beside one as a mourner. I knew now, and somehow the emotion was different than I had imagined. For mingled with the indescribable pang of regret that I would never hear my dad speak again, there was an almost glorious feeling, an uplifting thought bordering on happiness, that he died triumphant, uncompromising. I knew now what Paul meant when he said, "We sorrow not as others which have no hope.

The world is emptier today than it has ever been for me, and heaven seems strangely closer than I ever conceived it. But overcoming that feeling of personal loss is the joyful thought that the grave cannot always be victorious over our beloved dead."

My father was doing personal work in Riverside, California, going from door to door, soon after Daniel Sommer died. He knocked on the door of one of the elders of a congregation composed chiefly of members from Texas. This man said, a little contemptuously, to my father, "I see where your leader died." Without a moment's hesitation, Dad replied, "Yes, and if you will read a little further on in the same book, you will see that he rose again!"

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FROM HOLY KISS TO HANDSHAKE

Robert Meyers

I remember fondly from my late teens the stern face of Will M. Thompson, minister for the Church of Christ at 318 South Grand in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. Rather grandiosely, we called our rectangular brick building the "Grand Avenue Church of Christ," and we were even more proud of Will M. Thompson, one of the last religious debaters who knew and used all the tricks of the trade.

Under Will M.'s tutelage I compiled several dozen debate notebooks which listed denominational arguments on all controversial religious topics and carefully answered each one. This training, and Will M.'s own personality, so influenced my adolescence that I have even yet not totally shaken off the instinct to go for the jugular vein when an argument gets hot.

More to the point, for purposes of this article, I recall the acid scorn with which he occasionally pilloried some real or imagined denominational preacher who had opined that a sweet roll and a glass of orange juice could serve as effectively for communion as Welch's grape juice and a Manischewitz cracker.

"This is exactly how men with no respect for the laws of God treat His sacred word!" he would thunder. "The elements have been prescribed. No man has a right to change them. When God invests a particular form with significance, it must not be altered — *ever!"*

Although the great man never explained to us where in the Bible the elements were described in such a way that they could be equated with our grape juice and baked crackers, I believed him to be infallible and in later years I ridiculed more than one unwary denominational preacher who tried to argue that it is the spirit and meaning of communion that matters eternally, not the precisely preserved form of it.

When Will M. stood at the door after one of these fierce anathemas and shook hands with all of us in the unvarying ritual which he would have been severely criticized for omitting, I never once realized how he was acting out a partial denial of his own logic. I will explain later, though you can begin to guess from my title.

His position, a standard Church of Christ position, was that both *form* and *spirit* were equally important in obedience to any commandment or participation in any ritual in the assembly of the church. They were indissolubly wedded in a tie no man could sever with impunity. Immersion, therefore, was not merely a religiously and culturally useful mode of initiation into the Christian family, derived from Jewish washings and perhaps influenced by Essene practices, with the vital element being the intent and the spirit of it. It was, rather, the permanent and *only* way to express one's faith and enter the community.

If the church later wondered how to baptize in the Sahara, and asked if pouring sand would satisfy the meaning of it, or if it seemed unnecessarily difficult to manage in the Arctic, no matter. Man not only had no right to change the *spirit* and *intent* of a ceremony; he had equally no right to alter its *form* to suit the circumstances of a different time and place.

This appeared divine logic to me and I bought it without question. Yet oddly, as I perceived years later, in many ways we were doing even then exactly what we condemned in others. We had quite disregarded Christ's assumption that we would fast, along with His and the church's approved examples of fasting, arguing that any similar form of discipline would fulfill the spirit and intent of that early Christian practice.

I can't remember any other disciplines we ever practiced which might have substituted for fasting, but I certainly know that we did not fast. On the contrary, we were great covered-dish dinner people. When I look back it seems we were eating constantly. The food was superb and abundant, much better than I usually got at home, and it was there that I learned to overeat. I used to try to get enough to last me for a week.

If someone asked us why we didn't fast, our lawyers would reply: "Oh, that was only a custom of those early times and it was not intended for us." I did not notice, as a child, that they never bothered to explain how we knew that some commandments were customs, and other commandments were commandments. Somehow we just knew.

If by some quirk of serious attention to plain orders in the New Testament our elders went to pray over a sick person (as opposed to the comfort and convenience of "remembering" him during a short prayer on Sunday morning in the meetinghouse), surely it was permissible to ignore James' clear injunction about using oil. Or, for that matter, the laying on of hands.

"After all," exploded one exasperated elder who was actually challenged on this point, "what *kind* of oil, for heaven's sake? And what a mess!" So, a judicious substitution of *form* was allowed in the belief that, after all, the spirit of the commandment had been fulfilled. No one was unkind enough to draw analogies between that ceremony and certain other ceremonies in which we refused absolutely to make such distinctions.

When it was noticed, as it rarely was, that John's gospel not only omits the story of the Lord's Supper but substitutes for it a story no one else tells — the washing by Jesus of the disciple's feet — we saw no indictment of our claims there, either.

True, Jesus commanded us there to wash one another's feet, and He nowhere repealed the orders. True, he used such strong language as he seldom used anywhere else about any ritual: "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet." But foot-washing was not in our tradition, so we ignored the passage.

If we were asked why we disregarded so plain an order, as I was asked once in LaGrange, Georgia by a dear old Baptist lady who was sure I would miss heaven unless she washed my feet, we replied loftily: "Oh, that was a custom of ancient times and not really meant to be binding on us today. We fulfill the *spirit* of it by offering each other a glass of water on a warm day, or just by being hospitable in our homes. Don't you see?"

And if one objected, as my dear old lady did: "But I thought you were the people who insisted on literalness in all the commandments," we smiled tolerantly and said: "Only on the *essential* things." That sweet vagueness did the trick for us, unless there happened to be a gadfly around to pursue such illogic. And if there was, we found ways to swat him until his infernal buzzing stopped.

I am ready now to return to dear old Will M. Thompson and his weekly demonstration of his own inconsistency. Five times in the New Testament we are directly commanded to greet each other with the holy kiss or the kiss of peace. No language in Scripture is clearer than the language in which these orders are given. Yet my boyhood mentor never passed that unequivocal commandment on to us. Quietly, he practiced a different form which he believed to be expressive of the same spirit that lay behind Peter and Paul's decree.

The substitution had been made long before, of course, as any student of church history knows. In the early centuries the church had faithfully practiced the holy kiss as enjoined by the apostles, although the Church Fathers differ as to just where it came in the meetings. Since an emancipated Roman slave was formally kissed when he entered the company of free people, Christians may have used their kiss at the time of baptism to symbolize entrance into the new life.

Most commentaries do not consider the perils of the practice, but I found a couple out of thirty that did. A French commentary on Romans (Godet) does a bit of prim guessing: "Probably the president of the assembly gave the kiss to the brother who sat next to him, and he to his neighbor, while the same thing took place on the part of the women." Ernest Best in the *Harper's Commentary* says: "We can assume that it was not on the lips because of the sexual association of such kisses."

These guesses do not seem to fit what happened in all the early churches, for in the *Apostolic Institutions* we discover that rules were laid down later to remove from the practice whatever might be offensive in it. "These things being done, let the men apart, and the women apart, salute one another with a kiss in the Lord." That sounds suspiciously like the kind of advice which comes *after* somebody has complained, not before!

And if Will Durant can be trusted in his magnificent *Caesar and Christ*, there had obviously been offenses and complaints. "The final ritual of the agape was the 'kiss of love.' In some congregations this was given only by men to men, and by women to women; in others this hard restriction was not enforced. Many participants discovered an untheological delight in the pleasant ceremony; and Tertullian and others denounced it as having led to sexual indulgences . . . and that the kiss should not be repeated if it gave pleasure. In the third century [it] gradually disappeared." Durant cites Turtullian and Clement, especially, although Origen, Justin Martyr and others all had ad-vice to give about the ritual.

It was resurrected in an altered form in the Middle Ages. In weddings, after the *agnus Dei* had been chanted, the groom went to the altar, got the kiss of peace from the priest, and returned to his wife to give her that kiss at the foot of the crucifix. In the mid-13th century a safe way of conveying the kiss was introduced into England: the *osculatorium* or *tabella pacis*, a metal disc with a holy picture, was passed around in the church to be kissed.

But this, too, caused some scandals because people quarreled over who would have the honor of kissing it first. And it had some uses not intended. When a young and beautiful girl kissed it, she often found beside her a hand-some young man who waited impatiently to take it directly from her hand and lips.

So much for human frailty! The kiss commanded by Peter and Paul fell by the wayside long ago and there is no serious movement to revive it in the church ritual. Even the most adamant literalist seems quite content to let this particular form be changed, so long as the spirit behind the

commandment is somehow preserved. The substitute form is so widely accepted in fact that J. B. Phillips doesn't even bother to translate what Paul and Peter said. He simply paraphrases it in language every modern Christian will understand: "Give one another a hearty handshake all around!"

I heard the final irony in this connection just the other day. A friend of mine in the Church of Christ heard the Phillips version read in a study group and complained vigorously about the change. "You can't trust modern versions," he said. "Paul said holy kiss, not handshake." It did not occur to him that the new translation only sanctified an action which he had already taken.

No one who reads this journal will suppose that it is my hope to revive the holy kiss. The churches I know have troubles enough already, and I am more than happy to join them in expressing the spirit of that commandment through an altered form. I would only urge my brothers to extend to other people the same charity which they find for themselves.

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OFFICE NOTES

Effective with this issue the subscription rate for this journal is 4.00 per year, or two years for 7.00. In clubs of five or more, 2.00 per year per name. Since many share the paper with others on our club rate, we are continuing a below-cost offer, for we are eager that the paper be introduced to more and more concerned people. New subs and renewals sent to us before this announcement will, of course, be honored at the old rates. This is only the third time that we have increased our sub rate in 25 years, and we hope it will be the last.

Our next issue will be our 25th Anniversary Edition. This counts the six years that this journal bore the name of *Bible Talk,* 1952-58. We plan a few special features that we believe will interest you. We have some readers who have been with us all these years. Our newer readers who would like to become acquainted with things we've been saying in yesteryears might take advantage of our offer of 18 back issues, selected at random back to 1960, for only 3.00. But we have no issues of *Bible Talk* available.

For 5.95 we will send you the bound volume of all our issues for 1975-76. We are pleased that this volume is beautifully crafted by a small shop in Dallas that takes such pains with its work that it chooses to take on no new customers rather than lower its quality. It matches our other available volumes, which are: *Things That Matter Most* (1967), 3.50; *The Quest of God* (1968), 3.50; *The New Humanity* (1970), 3.50; *The Restoration Mind* (1971-72), 4.50; *The Church of Christ: Yesterday and Today* 1973-74), 4.95.

John Bunyan: The Tinker of Bedford at only 3.25 is a new book we think you will appreciate. Imprisoned for 12 years, he profoundly influenced his world by his facile pen, finally giving us *Pilgrim 's Progress.* His writings were banned during his lifetime.

Understanding the New Testament Book by Book at 3.25 is a new book that will give you a readable and resourceful introduction and background to each book, and it helps you to study the Bible with joy and ease.

Talks to Jews and Non-Jews by Carl Ketcherside is now available at 5.25, and you will find it both interesting and resourceful. If you are interested in learning to really pray, then you must read R. A. Torrey's *The Power of Prayer* for 2.25. Our prices include postage.

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OUR CHANGING WORLD

The Old Meeting House in Bethany, W. V. has been named a historic place by the National Park Service and will henceforth be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Built in 1850, it served as the meeting-house for the Church of Christ in Bethany until 1915 when a larger facility was erected. Originally this congregation met at Brush Run, the first of the Campbell churches, and it moved into Bethany in the late 1820's. The lot was deeded to the congregation by Alexander Campbell. The present old structure is a model of the 19th century church architecture, and it is built upon the foundation of the first building. In 1966 the old place was opened for the first time in many years for a Lord's Day service involving folk from some eight different groups of Churches of Christ-Christian Churches in what was the first of a decade of annual unity forums, held mostly on college campuses.

The Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in Canada in their 1976 Convention passed Resolution 4, which calls for their people "to work toward the realization of unity within and between the several bodies having their historical roots in the Campbell-Stone Movement, namely, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Church of Christ, and the Christian Church, known as unaligned, or Independent." As a result of this resolution the Christian Churches of Western Canada have proposed that a regional convention he held for the purpose of spiritual enrichment and inter-fellowship between the three bodies named, and that said convention be under the auspices of the World Convention of Churches of Christ.

In a subscription drive correspondence the *U. S. Catholic* states that it realizes that its readers are puzzled about the Confession and not really satisfied with the Mass, and that there is an effort on to make these more meaningful. It says it draws ideas not only from Father Theodore Hesburgh, but also the likes of Ralph Nader and Billy Graham. With that kind of openness the *U. S. Catholic* will soon be in the class with mainline Church of Christ journals!

Speaking of Billy Graham, our national radio-TV program, Herald of Truth, recently sent out an appeal for funds for radio time in Spain on the grounds that if we didn't raise the money the Billy Graham people would get the time. One of our subscribers, Jim Smith of Ft. Worth, wrote the Abilene sponsors that he did not want to contribute on such a motive as that, for he would like to *see both* the Graham people and the Church of Christ folk get time. He also wrote: "Standing before the Judge, I would rather accept a person as a brother in Christ, and be mistaken in doing that, than for him to be a brother and for me not to have treated him as such. The latter would be the worse mistake."

The Central Church of Christ in New Orleans is now around four years old. Sometime back they issued a statement as to their intentions, signed by the charter members: "We, as baptized believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, have united as a congregation of the Lord's church with love for God and for each other, with kindness, mutual understanding, and fellowship. We are pledged to God's way through Christ. It is our desire to commune with God, to be filled with his Spirit, and to show the risen Christ in our lives. We look forward to continued fellowship in the brotherhood of Christ and to mutual edification by pursuit of common goals consistent with God's revealed will. We encourage honest, continuous study of his written word that we may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. We ask for your prayers, as you have ours, as we work together for the cause of Christ."

The University Church of Christ in Austin, which sponsors the Biblical Studies Center at the university, has begun a program of helping divorced people. This has been long overdue among our people. We are encouraged to get this word from Austin and to learn that some positive steps are being taken to show our divorced brothers and sisters that Jesus still loves them and that they are still within the fellowship of his Body on earth. Their bulletin, *Single Again*, may be had by writing to 1903 University Ave., Austin 78705. We now have numerous preachers among the divorced.

The Forest Hill Church of Christ in Amarillo, Texas recently made a few changes in their assembly, for one Sunday at least. They cut the sermon to half its length and doubled the time for singing! If that were not enough, they had singing by special groups. It just goes to show that we *can* change.

READER'S EXCHANGE

It's unfortunate that our brethren have found another divisive rallying point — one's particular favorite translation! — *Phillip Roberson, Box 3147, Bartlesville, Ok. 74003*

(While that is unfortunate, we are to remember that divisions are never over little things like organs or translations, but something very large indeed: *carnality.* Paul lists factions and divisions alongside idolatry and fornication, and called them all the work of the flesh. And that ain't little! — *Ed.)*

It seems that the first I heard about you was some trouble you were causing in Dallas, and the next was that you were disturbing the peace at Henderson, Tenn. I heard and believed these things because they were told to me by sound brethren. After being associated with these "sound brethren" for a number of years I began to find myself more and more out of step with legalistic and exclusive sound doctrine. I began reading such unsound papers as Charles Holt's *Sentinel of Truth,* who in turn introduced me to *Mission Messenger, Integrity* and *Restoration Review.* It is refreshing to read articles by brothers who are more interested in preserving the unity which the Spirit gives than in encouraging division over every petty opinion. — *Burton Neugent, 2119 South N. St., Ft. Smith, Ar. 72901*

(You probably heard and believed right, for, after all, sound brethren can't be wrong. An editor worth his salt is likely to disturb the peace. So it was with him who is called the Prince of Peace, even though he was no editor. It all depends on what one makes peace mean. To enjoy that peace that only Jesus can give, we might need for someone to shake us up now and again. The Spirit might even do so, and *peace is* his fruit. — *Ed.*)

One gem from Watchman Nee's *The Normal Christian Church Life* reminded me of your article in the May issue, "The Hidden Unity of the Church." Speaking of the unity of the Spirit he says: "We cannot make this unity, since by the Spirit *we are* one in Christ, and we cannot break it, because it is an eternal fact in Christ; but we can destroy the *effects of* it, so that its expression in the Church is lost." Many times I read your articles to my wife Janice as she fixes supper. — *Joe Plemon, Anna, Il. 62906*

I've known Ben Franklin all his life, and while I cannot accept all the doctrine he has lately embraced (tongues and healing), he is still my brother and a fine one. The *Gospel Advocate* referred to him as "Franklin" in their glowing report of the debate. If he was ever my brother he still is, as long as he is preaching Christ and him crucified. I guess I'm a rebel, and at 75 years of age it is high time I saw the light. — *Gladice Marlow, Carbondale, Il.*

In our story of the Brazilian missionary (who looks like Campbell!) we told of how R. A. Torrey's *The Power of Prayer* changed his life. We can now supply that book, reprinted many times, for 2.20.

Alex Bills, 4137 Corbett, Oklahoma City 73115, boldly calls himself a charismatic, and he is one of the leaders of "His People Together" which has both national and regional gatherings. Last December 200 gathered in Oklahoma City from Disciples, Church of Christ, Christian Church, and he reports that some were healed and some received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. You might want to be on his mailing list, for he has regular mailouts.

A class of believers of the Carriage Hill Church of Christ in Montgomery, Alabama has been studying the *Declaration and Address* by Thomas Campbell, making its way through that document and marking vital passages. The group is wonderfully encouraged by what they have found, realizing for the first time the riches of their heritage in the Restoration Movement.

The bulletin of the Westside Church of Christ, 11810 N. W. 19th St., Ft. Lauderdale, Fl., describes the congregation in these terms: "The group of believers at Westside is simply and earnestly searching the entire Word of God as we seek guidance from His Holy Spirit. We seek not to be the only Christians but to be Christians only, committed to God's Son, our resurrected Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Only in Him can we have the victory in life that all men want but so few recognize — true love, joy, peace, and other results of His Holy Spirit's working through those desiring to 'walk in His (Jesus') steps.' " Change did I say? Don't leave yet!

Mission, under the talented leadership of Ron Durham (Ph. D., Rice), is an unusually fine magazine these days. The March issue was a special on Christianity and the Arts. You get 24 pages of goodies each month for only $6.00 a year. The address is Box 15024, Austin, Tx. 78761. It is probably the most daring and most ambitious literary project in the history of Churches of Christ.

Our new price for this journal is $4.00 per year or 2 years for $7.00. In clubs of five or more $2.00 per name per year. Please help us to reach more concerned folk by sending this paper to others. We are growing and the responses are encouraging.

Our next issue will be a special 25th anniversary edition. Don't miss it!

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